

## Abstract

A method for generating customized alerts related to the procurement, sourcing, strategic sourcing and/or sale of one or more items by an enterprise is disclosed. The method is based on a Value Chain Intelligence (VCI) system that enables suppliers and procurement professionals to leverage enterprise and marketplace data in order to potentially improve decision-making in business enterprises. Accordingly, internal data from enterprises and external data from suppliers, catalogs, and marketplaces are integrated and analyzed in real time for their impact on supply chains processes. When an event occurs or data is received potentially affecting decisions regarding the procurement, sourcing, strategic sourcing, and/or sale of one or more items, the system correlates the data with pre-determined conditions, which, when satisfied, trigger one or more software modules to send alerts to specified users about the potential impact of the event and/or data on the particular item/s. Alerts may be system-defined or user-defined, and customized according to types of users, messages, media, format, and other factors. Components for implementing this method consist of internal data collection components, external data collection components, data integration components, and data application components. Various methods for searching, extracting, transforming, integrating, analyzing, and representing both data internal to an enterprise and data external to an enterprise are also disclosed.